to present its point of view. I went to the meeting. The classroom was full. Young instructors predominated, but there were also some elderly professors. When I took my place at the chairman's table and began to speak, a voice from the audience interrupted me. "We have invited a spokesman of the students, but we don't need to be harangued by a revolutionary worker." Only then did I realize that I was in my proletarian disguise, with trousers stuffed into high muddy boots. The chairman explained the misunderstanding, I apologized for my attire, and continued my speech.

The Academic Union was in a most difficult position. All the liberal professors had decided to join the general strike. However, a strike of professors would have amounted to closing the academic institutions, and this was exactly what radical parties were trying to prevent. Referring to the morning meeting of the students, I said that, because of the particular role played by the University and colleges, the only way the professors could support the general strike was by fulfilling their usual academic functions.

A young instructor asked me, "Does the speaker believe the University will protect the workers from being mown down by machine guns?"

I answered, "I do. In the past four weeks not a drop of blood has been shed within these walls, but I am not sure we would have been able to hold our meetings elsewhere without heavy losses."

"Are you sure the floors and walls of the University will not be stained with blood tomorrow?" insisted my opponent.

"I am not," I replied. "We are taking a chance."

A senior member of the Academic Union remarked, "I am not convinced that the strategy of the revolutionary parties is wise. However, we cannot change it. It leaves us no choice."

And the Union joined in the resolution of the students' meeting. We gained a twenty-four-hour delay.

THE LAST UNIVERSITY MEETING

On the morning of October 15, General Trepov notified the president of the University that he would use military force that day to end the revolutionary gatherings. A flying meeting was held in the half-empty main hall. Not more than some six to eight hundred students had come, but the spirit of those who came was high. A fire-eater from the Caucasus offered a plan to defend the University building: to block all doors except the main entrance, gather material to barricade that last exit, and man the barricade with armed students. I objected and pointed out that this proposal was child-